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Summary record of the 39th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 16 November 1998, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Asadi ..... (Islamic Republic of Iran)

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98-82373 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council (*continued*) (A/C.2/53/L.39)

1. **Mr. Amaziane** (Morocco), introducing the draft resolution entitled "Public administration and development" contained in document A/C.2/53/L.39, said that Argentina, Burkina Faso, Egypt, the Philippines and Senegal had become additional sponsors.

2. The draft resolution was aimed at making more room in the General Assembly's agenda for the question of administration at a time when the respective roles of the State and the private sector in the organization of society and development were at the core of the debate. A thorough consideration of the issue in the Second Committee would definitely yield positive results.

3. He recommended that the Committee should adopt draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.39 without a vote.

Agenda item 93: Sustainable development and international economic cooperation

(e) Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s (*continued*) (A/C.2/53/L.23)

4. **Mr. Özügergin** (Turkey), Vice-Chairman, introducing the draft resolution submitted by Indonesia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s (A/C.2/53/L.23), said that the members of the European Union, Norway, Japan and the United States of America had become sponsors and recommended that the Committee should adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

5. **The Chairman** asked the Committee if it wished to adopt the draft resolution contained in document A/C.2/53/L.23.

6. *Draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.23 was adopted.*

7. **The Chairman** announced that the Committee had completed its consideration of agenda item 93 (e).

Agenda item 96: Training and research

(a) United Nations University (*continued*) (A/C.2/53/L.24/Rev.1)

8. **Mr. Özügergin** (Turkey), Vice-Chairman, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.24/Rev.1 on the United Nations University and recommended that the Committee should adopt it by consensus.

9. **Mr. Azaiev** (Tunisia) said that his country had become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.24/Rev.1.

10. **The Chairman** asked the Committee if it wished to adopt the draft resolution contained in document A/C.2/53/L.24/Rev.1.

11. *Draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.24/Rev.1 was adopted.*

12. **The Chairman** announced that the Committee had completed its consideration of agenda item 96 (a).

Agenda item 97: Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources (*continued*) (A/C.2/53/L.22)

13. **Mr. Özügergin** (Turkey), Vice-Chairman, introduced the draft resolution on the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources (A/C.2/53/L.22). He announced that Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Morocco and Tunisia had become sponsors. During the informal consultations held on the draft resolution, one delegation had requested that a vote should be taken on it.

14. **The Chairman** asked the Committee if it wished to put draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.22 to a vote.

15. **Mr. Amaziane** (Morocco), speaking on a point of order, said that he wondered whether the Chairman was empowered to ask the Second Committee to put a draft resolution to a vote, or whether it should not rather be for a delegation to do so.

16. **Mr. Shapiro** (United States of America) said that his delegation, during informal consultations, had asked that the draft resolution should be put to a vote.

17. **The Chairman** said that it was indeed on the basis of the results of informal consultations that he was asking the Committee if it wished to put draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.22 to a vote.

18. *It was so decided.*

19. **Mr. Hili** (Malta), **Mr. Ba'omar** (Oman) and **Mr. Al-Qaisi** (Bahrain) said that their delegations had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.22.

20. **Mr. Arbel** (Israel) said that in its statement of 28 October 1998 on the item, his delegation had expressed the hope that the international community would support Israel's endeavours for peace in the Middle East. Evidently, those

expectations had been too high. Inasmuch as the issue of control over natural resources was covered in the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement of 28 September 1995, the draft resolution under consideration was superfluous. Any discussion of the matter could not ignore the mutual commitments specified in that Agreement, with full respect for its provisions. Israel and the Palestinian Authority had agreed to resolve outstanding issues through direct negotiations, and progress had recently been made with the signing of the Wye River Memorandum. It was therefore regrettable that the Committee should be discussing draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.22. Israel would vote against the draft resolution and urged delegations that supported the peace process to do the same.

21. **Mr. Shapiro** (United States of America) said that his country was firmly opposed to the draft resolution under consideration, for it presented two insurmountable problems. Firstly, it involved the General Assembly in the direct negotiations between the parties to resolve their differences, thereby predetermining the outcome of the talks. For the same reason, the use of the term "sovereignty" prejudged the outcome of the negotiations. That was all the more inappropriate in the light of the signing of the Wye River Memorandum, which had injected new movement into the peace process. Secondly, his Government continued to oppose all references to "the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem". Such references had no effect whatsoever on issues of sovereignty and prejudged the permanent political arrangements that could be determined only by the direct negotiations to which the parties had committed themselves. For those reasons, his delegation would vote against the draft resolution.

22. **Mr. Aiala** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.22 condemned the Israeli policy of pillaging natural resources and confiscating land in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and in the Syrian Golan. The General Assembly was, indeed, directly concerned in the peace process, which was based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and on the principle of land for peace. Any subsequent agreement should respect the provisions of international law and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. The Second Committee was directly concerned in the draft resolution under consideration since the Israeli occupying Power was acting in a spirit which was directly contrary to the principles of development and the dignity of the human being which the Committee defended.

23. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.22.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen.

Against:

Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Bahamas, El Salvador, Georgia, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Panama, Paraguay, Swaziland.

24. *Draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.22 was adopted by 116 votes to 2, with 8 abstentions.*

25. **Mr. Glanzer** (Austria), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the members of the European Union had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.22 because they believed that the natural resources of a territory seized by force of arms should not be used inappropriately or illegally by the occupying Power. The European Union reaffirmed that the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 was applicable to the occupied territories and that any infringement of the rights of the Palestinian people under that Convention was illegal. However, the issues referred to in the draft resolution were matters to be dealt with in the negotiations in the ongoing peace process. The draft

resolution which had just been adopted should therefore not be considered in any way as prejudicial to the outcome of those negotiations. Any action or statement which might be seen as doing so must be avoided.

26. **Mr. Ito** (Japan) said that his country was following the peace process with great interest and was endeavouring to assist the parties involved. It had provided aid to Palestine and would continue that policy. His delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.22 and wished to emphasize that it agreed with the wording of paragraph 4, in which the General Assembly expressed the hope that the issue would be dealt with in the framework of the final status negotiation between the Palestinian and Israeli sides. It also wished to reaffirm that the draft resolution which had just been adopted in no way prejudged the ongoing negotiations. However, his delegation believed that the Second Committee, which was more specifically responsible for economic development and cooperation, was not the appropriate forum in which to deal with the matter under consideration.

27. **Mr. Kerpens** (Suriname), **Mr. Talbot** (Guyana) and **Mr. Fawaz** (Lebanon) said that, if their delegations had been present when the vote had been taken on draft resolution A/C.2/53/L.22, they would have voted in favour of it.

28. **Mr. Basmajiev** (Bulgaria) said that his delegation wished to associate itself with the statement in explanation of vote made by the representative of Austria on behalf of the European Union.

29. **The Chairman** said that, before the Committee concluded its consideration of agenda item 97, he wished to propose the following draft decision:

> "The General Assembly takes note of document A/53/163*–E/1998/79* containing a report on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan, prepared by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, covering the period from June 1997 to May 1998."

30. He said he took it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft decision he had just read out.

31. *It was so decided.*

32. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 97.

Agenda item 93: Sustainable development and international economic cooperation (*continued*) (A/53/374 and A/53/664; A/C.2/53/6)

33. **Mr. Glanzer** (Austria), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia), the associated country Cyprus and the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area (Iceland and Norway), explained that his statement had initially been intended for delivery in the Fifth Committee. The European Union had repeatedly expressed its support for "development dividends", a concept first put forward by the Secretary-General in his "track II" reform proposals. While the General Assembly had approved $13.1 million for projects and activities to be financed from the Development Account, nearly half the current biennium had elapsed without the funds having been used for development activities. The European Union supported the Secretary-General's proposal that the resources of the Development Account should be allocated to global, interregional and regional programmes, with emphasis on assistance to developing countries for their follow-up to the major United Nations conferences. It agreed that "networking for development" should be the general focus of the projects and activities undertaken and noted that that was reflected in the eight proposals outlined in document A/53/374.

34. Having consistently argued that proposed activities should have succinct objectives and measurable outcomes, and that they should complement existing programmes, the European Union had noted that the Secretary-General's initial proposal, contained in document E/1998/81, had left something to be desired in terms of modalities for the evaluation of results and project-specific performance indicators. It was grateful to the Secretary-General for having taken those concerns into account. Nonetheless, it shared the view of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) that the indicators could be further refined, for example, by including a description of the situation before the implementation of projects, which would enable Member States and the Secretariat to measure what had been accomplished. Like the Advisory Committee, it also hoped that future reporting would contain full details on the resource requirements of projects and information on how they were to be financed. The European Union requested the General Assembly to authorize the use of those funds for development activities without delay.

35. **Mr. Ito** (Japan) noted with satisfaction that the report of the Secretary-General on the utilization of the development dividend (A/53/374) provided more details on proposed projects than the previous report (E/1998/81) had done. He noted that, within the context of reviewing the United Nations, the Organization must demonstrate to the international community that reforms were actually being implemented and that they produced tangible results. Convinced that reform was necessary not only with regard to the Security Council and finance but also in the field of development, the Prime Minister of Japan had proposed, at the Summit of the Group of Seven, held in Lyons, in 1996, that the savings gained through reforms should be reinvested in development programmes. The resources of the Development Account for the current biennium had been available for some time and should be utilized for the direct benefit of developing countries. However, the proposals contained in the report (A/53/374) seemed to focus more on United Nations organizations and agencies than on the situation in developing countries. In future, the views of developing countries should be accorded all due importance in the formulation of projects.

36. Moreover, all the Secretary-General's proposals had to do with information technology. His delegation supported the underlying principle of those proposals, namely that developing countries must not be excluded from the globalization of the economy and that technology could be a boon to their development. With regard to networking for development, each organization was supposed to implement its project independently. Nevertheless, consideration might be given to establishing an integrated global information network that would enable all development-related agencies and all Member States, including the developing countries, to share information on development. Noting that the first half of the biennium was coming to a close and that the Development Account had already been discussed at some length, his delegation believed that it was high time to reach a conclusion and implement projects. Once launched, projects must be publicized throughout the international community; the world must be made aware of the existence of the Account and its utilization. Lastly, in document A/53/374, the Secretary-General proposed eight projects for the utilization of the $13 million available, without offering any alternatives to Member States. Believing that other uses were possible, his delegation hoped that, in future, other proposals would be submitted to Member States.

37. **Mr. Nebenzya** (Russian Federation) said that his country rejected the idea of having Member States assume additional obligations under the regular budget, and that the Development Account must be a supplementary development mechanism. His delegation followed with interest "track I" of the reform process, convinced that it would facilitate the formulation of projects to assist developing countries within a partnership, including with the countries in transition. Furthermore, his delegation saw no need to request the Secretary-General to prepare another report by March 1999, not only because of the cost involved but also because sufficient documents were available to evaluate Development Account activities.

38. **Ms. Lawlor** (United States of America) said that, despite the extensive discussion of the Development Account which had already taken place in the Fifth Committee, the Economic and Social Council and the Second Committee, her delegation had been under the impression, on reading document A/C.2/53/6, that the question would be discussed in the Second Committee. It recognized that the important question of the utilization of the Development Account warranted further consideration. While her delegation supported the proposal put forward by the Group of 77 and China in document A/53/664, it hoped to be able to discuss it informally before the Secretary-General prepared another report, requested by March 1999 in document A/53/664. It hoped to see the developing countries benefit from the resources of the Development Account without delay, according to modalities to be determined.

39. **Ms. Fahmy** (Egypt), referring to document A/53/664, said that it was useful to stress the criteria to be applied to projects to be financed by accounts specially established to further the interests of the developing countries. With regard to document A/C.2/53/6, she wondered whether the Chairman of the Fifth Committee was authorized to set a deadline, although she recognized that the biennium was half over. She believed that the Financial Regulations contained provisions authorizing the Secretariat to utilize appropriations from any section of the regular budget for one year after the end of the biennium in question. Since the Fifth Committee and the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) were the only organs authorized to approve programming under the regular budget, the Second Committee's consideration of the utilization of the Development Account was necessarily limited. Agreeing with the representative of Japan that the views of the States concerned — i.e., the developing States — should be taken into account, her delegation believed that the letter from the Group of 77 and China and the views expressed by Member States in the Second Committee should be transmitted to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee. Indeed, the Fifth Committee would be considering the practicability of the Account and the content of the programmes to be financed,

and CPC must ensure that programme mandates were consistent with the medium-term plan and its objectives.

40. **The Chairman** said that document A/53/664 had been distributed simultaneously in the Second and Fifth Committees under agenda items 93 and 113.

41. **Mr. Glanzer** (Austria) requested that the views he had expressed on behalf of the European Union should be transmitted to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, together with the letter from the Group of 77.

42. **The Chairman** said that he would transmit the statements delivered in the Second Committee to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee in a letter, to which he would attach the summary record of the current meeting and document A/53/664.

43. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 93.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.